

for future fulfillment of emergency service response to residents, visitors, cooperators, and those traveling through the county. Communication and computer support infrastructure upgrading requirements are identified in the hazard prioritization and mitigation strategy sections.

Transportation corridors, specifically State Highways 31 and 33 are vulnerable to closure by wildfires and smoke (both temporary and long term closure). Numerous U.S. Forest Service roads are also vulnerable to closure by wildfire and have been closed because of wildfires.

## **4.0 HAZARD LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION**

Hazards from wildfire can be found throughout Teton County. Location of WUI areas that are at high or extreme risk due to location and adjacent wildfire fuels are identified in Appendix A, Map 4. The areas identified as extreme incur high fuel loadings next to or in close proximity to developments or homes. Ingress/egress issues, signage, and creation of defensible space by homeowners are included in mitigation recommendations. County emergency services communications, updating and coordinating countywide emergency dispatch systems, and emergency equipment are defined and described within the hazard identification and mitigation sections.

Wildfire specialists, County Fire Department personnel, and Federal agencies have participated in the identification of the various hazards. Questionnaires addressing wildfire structural risk and hazard identification have been distributed and received from private home owners and various stakeholders of the county including emergency services personnel.

## **5.0 HAZARD POTENTIAL AND TRENDS**

The interface areas within Teton County are characterized by a diverse mixture of housing structural types, development patterns, ornamental and natural vegetation and natural fuels.

In the event of a wildfire, vegetation, structures and other flammable materials can combine with unpredictable results. Reviewing past wildland/urban interface fires shows that property may be destroyed or damaged for one or more of the following reasons:

- Combustible roofing material;
- Wood construction;
- Structures with no defensible space;
- Development with poor access to structures for fire protection;
- Developments located in heavy natural fuel types;
- Structure/properties located on steep slopes covered with flammable vegetation;
- Limited water supply; and
- Winds over 30 miles per hour.

Teton County exhibits all of these characteristics, within the county, and in some instances, within very concentrated areas.

**Limited Road Access** is a major issue for all emergency service providers within the County. As population trends and demands for housing increase, some developments exhibit less than adequate turn-around space for emergency vehicles. Some County communities and developments are challenged by steep narrow roadways, while others are served by bridges that have weight restrictions imposed, thereby eliminating various types of fire suppression resources as an option in protecting lives and properties.

**Limited Water Supply** in WUI developments and communities within the County continue to hamper suppression operations in the interface. Wildland areas continue to rely on the natural water sources within the county, but those areas that are co-mingled with private ownership face characteristically inadequate water systems and lack of hydrants. In some areas, fire protection may need to rely more on each landowner's initiative to take preventative measures.

## **6.0 HAZARD PRIORITIZATION, MITIGATION GOALS**

Hazard prioritization and mitigation goals are addressed to meet the stated objectives. These objectives are: protection of life, property and values at risk. With the hazards confirmed, prioritization and goals were developed by the Teton County Wildfire Group. Mitigation actions to address these priorities are:

**1. Hazard: County Emergency Services Communication and Computer Support.**

The computer systems supporting County emergency services are currently operating at capacity. Emergency response to wildfires and other incidents do not have a common communication link.

*Mitigation Goal:* Update and maintain County emergency services computer servers and software, develop common link for emergency services communication.

**2. Hazard: County-wide Dispatching and Communications Plan is needed.**

A preplanned coordinated emergency services dispatch system utilizing a 911 center to integrate all emergency services and communications under one centralized system is needed.

*Mitigation goal:* Integrate county-wide 911 dispatching with emergency services computer support, software and communications to be 911 capable. Develop the communication plan.

**3. Hazard: Communications system and plan does not provide for utilization of Federal cooperators radio frequencies and repeaters.**

To assist in mutual aid and for the protection of fire fighters and residents, county emergency responders have a need to coordinate with federal responders and with